

CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A bending wave loudspeaker having an operating frequency range and a coincidence frequency which is above the operating frequency range, comprising a resonant panel having a main or major axis and a cross or minor axis and an aspect ratio of at least 2:1, a plurality of vibration exciters ~~exciting means~~ coupled to the panel to excite the panel into resonance along the cross or minor axis of the panel, and means restraining or preventing resonance along the main or major axis of the panel whereby the panel radiates an acoustic output which is of wide directivity along the cross or minor axis and of narrow directivity along the main or major axis of the panel.

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of vibration exciters ~~exciting means~~ forms the means restraining or preventing resonance along the main or major axis.

4. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 3, wherein the length ~~coupling of the plurality of vibration exciters~~ ~~exciting means to~~ along the panel is longer than the wavelength of sound in air at the lowest required frequency.

5. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 3, wherein the plurality of vibration exciters ~~exciting means~~ comprises a line of discrete exciters extending along the main or major axis and operated substantially in phase.

6. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein the spacing between the exciters is not ~~substantially~~ greater than half the wavelength in the panel at the highest operating frequency.

7. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein the line is rectilinear.

8. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein the line extends substantially from one end of the panel to the other end.

9. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein there are at least four exciters in the line.

10. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein the line of exciters is to one side of the median longitudinal axis of the panel.

11. (original) A loudspeaker according to claim 10, wherein the line is on the nodal line of the first lateral bending mode.

12. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein the exciters are equally spaced along the line.

13. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 5, wherein the exciter spacing d in the line and the bending stiffness B and areal density μ of the panel substantially conform to the formula:

$$\frac{B}{\mu} = \left(\frac{cd}{\pi} \right)^2$$

14. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 1 and 3-13, wherein the panel is rectangular.

15. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims ~~5-13~~ 6 and 8 to 13, wherein the line is rectilinear.

16. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 15, wherein the panel is rectangular.